

IDLE SONGS
AND
IDLE SONNETS.

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IDLE SONGS AND IDLE SONNETS

BY
 HARRISON CONRAD



CINCINNATI, OHIO
 THE EDITOR PUBLISHING COMPANY

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IDLE SONGS AND IDLE SONNETS

AD PATREM.

*Thy hand upled me o'er the rugged steep,
Through intricate paths, to the serener air,
Where all the upland fields are clothed in fair,
Capacious suns; nor didst thou quail, though deep
The tempests thundered near, but through the sweep
Of wind and flood, breasting the storm, didst bear
Thee on, till we the hights attained, and there,
Thy task consumed, thy tired lids drooped in sleep.
O if the flowers, plucked wild, which thee I bring,
Could make thy pillow sweeter, every thorn
That tore my flesh in plucking would be sweet!
But I behold my simple offering,
And, all thy brow unworthy to adorn,
I can but strew them at thy hallowed feet.*

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But a gathering mist obscures it, and I close my languid
eyes,
While from out the past a vision, like a wraith, I see arise.

I see two lips a-laughing above a muslin gown;
I see two eyes a-sparkling beneath her tresses brown;
And I hear her childish prattle as she climbs my knee to
look
Upon the gaudy colors of that little picture book.

I turn the leaves in silence. Each picture bears a trace
Of childish grief or gladness which time can ne'er erase.
This one in fancied sorrow she blotted with her tears,
And here the marks of fingers, preserved through all the
years;

This one is thumbed and ragged, and its dwarfs and giants
tell
How it held her soul enraptured with a fascinating spell.
I glance back o'er my shoulder for a pair of twinkling eyes;
I listen for her laughter, and her "Ah!" of glad surprise;

I pause to hear the clapping of her hands in sweet delight,
And I wait to feel the pressure of her arms around me
tight.
O what a cheat is fancy! I watch and wait in vain,
For vanished is my vision and it will not come again.

'Tis gone from me forever! and the voice of my despair
Cries out against the anguish that my soul was doomed to
bear;
But the wind alone gives answer, and its melancholy wail
Seems the voice of frightened goblins, flying, dying on the
gale.

I look into the fireplace, but it mocks my withered heart
With its ash beneath the embers; while the rain, with
sudden start,
Beats hard against my window, like the tears I scarce can
brook,
Falling fast upon the pages of that little picture book.

MAGGIE DRIVING HOME THE COWS.

Golden is the noon of summer,
And the crimson burst of dawn
Glow across the fairest meadows
Ever sun-gleam fell upon.
Clear the lark and sweet the robin
Pour their greeting to the morn,
And the saucy blackbird chirrups,
Swinging on the tasseled corn;
But the notes of one glad carol
All the sleepy meadows rouse,
'Tis the voice of Maggie singing,
Maggie driving home the cows—
Little Maggie,
Barefoot Maggie,
Maggie driving home the cows.

Through the sweet grass and the clover,
Sparkling in the glint of morn,
Down along the dark-green hedge-rows,
'Tween the fields of nodding corn,
With her blue sunbonnet swinging
Careless o'er her sunburnt arm,
And the shaggy shepherd near her,
Trips the fairy of the farm,
Urging on the lazy heifer

That has turned aside to browse,
Singing "Ho!" and "Hey, my Silky!"
As she drives the lowing cows—
 Little Maggie,
 Sunburnt Maggie,
Maggie driving home the cows.

Sunshine, sunshine all around her,
 Sunshine in her waving hair,
Sunshine in her eyes, and sunshine
 In each cadence of her air;
And the dew that hems her garments
 Flashes o'er the meadow-lawn,
Like a million lustrous jewels,
 Sparkling in the flush of dawn.
Sunshine—all the world is sunshine
 When her notes the meadows rouse,
Swelling from the crimson clover
 As she homeward drives the cows—
 Little Maggie,
 Bright-eyed Maggie,
Maggie driving home the cows.

Simple youth and simple beauty,
 All in innocence arrayed!
Sweeter dew and sweeter sunshine
 Never kissed a sweeter maid!
And I look along the hedge-rows,
 O'er the clover and the corn,
Where the maiden comes a-singing
 In the golden burst of morn,
And before that child of sunshine
 All my soul in rapture bows,
Gladdened with the joy she bringeth,

Driving, driving home the cows—
 Little Maggie,
 Light-heart Maggie,
Maggie driving home the cows.

THE STARS.

Child, upon thy mother's knee,
Gazing yonder through the night,
Why thy burst of baby glee?
Why thy rapturous delight?

Stars? Athwart the evening skies
Countless glittering orbs are spread:
What are they unto thine eyes
That have Wisdom's page ne'er read?

Coyly then the little girl
Answer lisps in baby tone:
"Some are gem and some are pearl
Strewn from God's celestial throne,

"Some are angels' laughing eyes
Peeping down from Heaven's blue,
Some are holes in Paradise,
All its glories leaking through!"

Simple child! In books grown old,
I search deep the boundless night,
And in each fair star behold
Some majestic sun, whose light,

On its circling planets shed,
Feeds them with life's warmth: and so,
From night's faintest glowworms, spread
O'er the firmament, there grow

Suns on myriad suns, sublime
In harmonious motion, one
Far to one in cadenced time
Right saluting, sun to sun,—

Spheres on myriad spheres, each true
Unto its appointed course,
Worlds on worlds that reach into
Universe on universe,—

System round vast system, till
All the glorious firmament
Finds its center in the will
Of the One Omnipotent.

So the child, and so do I
God's sublime creation scan;
And I wonder, musingly,
Which is happier, child or man?

THE CHRISTMAS HYMN.

Down through the cold, bleak valley
A pilgrim walked—alone ;
But the wind came up to greet him,
And a tremulous star that shone
The loveliest and the fairest
Amid the orbs of night,
Sent down a gleam to cheer him
And to pave his way with light.

Around, the glinting snow-dunes
Stretched in their cold embrace,
And the eddying crystals drifted
Up in his thin, pinched face ;
Close drew his cloak about him,
But the fiends of the gale danced near,
And they clutched at his rags in their revel,
And hissed in his frightened ear.

“O woe is me!” he muttered,
And his thin lips moved in prayer—
Lips that had long been silent
To aught save a soul’s despair.
“But courage, faint heart!” he whispered.
“And strength, weak limbs!” he cried ;
“For I draw me anear the cloister
Where the holy monks abide.

"Once I, in cowl and habit,
Prayed in that convent cell;
And the grace of God was with me,
Till I harked to a voice of hell:
I rose from my couch while the convent
Was wrapped in its holy sleep,
And, stealing forth in the midnight,
Went far from its hallowed keep.

"All up and down I have wandered
The ways and the haunts of men,
Till my soul is sick with sinning
And it longs for peace again.
I come, with a heart all burdened,
To fall at Thy holy shrine,
And again I would say, sweet Master,
I am Thine—I am Thine—I am Thine!"

His voice grew faint and fainter,
And his palsied step grew slow;
While fierce howled the gale about him,
And deep piled the drifting snow.
"Help—me—God!" and he staggered
As he lifted his voice in prayer:
But his wail was of one faint crying
In the wilderness of despair.

A step—a moan—a struggle,
And he sank on the blasted wold;
And a stealing sleep came o'er him,
Banishing pain and cold.
All still—all still—all quiet,
And the wind bore the snowdrifts near:
When, up from the valley wafted,
A faint sound, sweet and clear,

Fell on his struggling spirit
Like a calm on a troubled sea,
And swelled from a drowsy echo
To a wondrous melody.
'Twas the midnight Mass; and the fathers,
In the convent chapel dim,
Round the lowly crib were gathered,
Chanting a Christmas hymn.

"The monks! the monks!" he faltered,
As borne on the wings of night
Came up the song from the convent;
"The monks! the monks! and the light
That yonder shines in the valley,
Though mine eyes but see it dim,
Is the beacon-star of the cloister
Whence cometh the Christmas hymn.

"Help—me—God!" and he lifted
His wasted form from the ground;
And the gale swept by unheeded
As the narrow path he found.
"I am coming soon," he muttered,
"Though faint is thy beacon-light,
I come, good Father Prior,
To join thy hymn to-night!"

Up, up to the arching heavens
He lifted his glassy eyes,
And the one fair star looked on him
From the depths of the wintry skies;
Down the heavy way he bore him
To the convent gray and grim,
While sweeter and fuller and stronger
Grew the strains of the Christmas hymn.

"Again, again!" he whispered,
 "I am Thine, my Master, Thine!
Once more to Thy bosom take me,
 And Thy will shall e'er be mine!
I come, good Brother Porter,
 Though my heart is black with sin,
Let the convent gate swing open,
 Let the wandering pilgrim in!

"I come! I come!" and he tottered
 Up to the massive gate,
And his hand was upon the knocker:
 But it fell like a leaden weight,
While forth from the convent chapel
 Came the joyous strains again,
And he sank on the cold, white granite
 As they sang, "Amen! Amen!"

'Twas there that the good monks found him
 On that Christmas morn—alone;
With a snow-shroud wound about him,
 His lips to the convent stone.
The novices, praying o'er him,
 Asked, "Who can it be? ah, who?"
But the gray old Father Prior,
 He knew—he knew—he knew.

THE OLD COLLEGE BELL.

Where now are the days that with song and with story
We hallow Life's fairest, my brothers! to-night?
Gone—gone like a dream of ineffable glory
That fades ere we grasp its full meed of delight.
What left they? A circlet of splendor whose glamour
Reflects its effulgence o'er Time's fleeting years,
A faint, waking echo of Youth's merry clamor,
That, mellow as music, now falls on our ears.
Soft cometh the sound, like the cadence upwinging
Indistinct in the eve from the hush of the dell;
But out o'er the murmurs one clear voice is ringing,
'Tis the musical voice of the old college bell.

Is it real? is it dream? is it truth? is it fancy?
A dream that a sudden awaking will blast?
Or is it the wand of some weird necromancy
That waves o'er the Present and makes it the Past?
More subtle 'tis one than the wizards who vaunted
Their charms where the green waves of Araby roll:
'Tis Memory's finger, with magic enchanted,
That wakens the echoes deep down in the soul;
And Memory waves her fair wand and she bringeth
The Past from his tomb with her all-potent spell,
And a song from the seal she has broken outringeth—
'Tis the silvery song of the old college bell.

Sweet, sweet was its voice, clear the language it rang in:

But who could translate it? what youth understand?

And true was the musical meter it sang in:

But who e'er its wonderful anapests scanned?

"Come scale patient Learning's declivitous mountain,

The deep, yawning caverns of Knowledge explore;

Come quaff of the nectars of Wisdom's fair fountain,

And drink of the sweets of Pierian lore;

Come forth in the green fields of Labor and Duty,

Draw deep from the waters of Science's well;

Come dight all thy soul in a mantle of beauty!"

So sang through the decades the old college bell.

So sang it—so rang it: who heeded its warning?

What recked we if Time never paused in his flight?

We greeted its call with dismay in the morning,

And hailed its last stroke with a shout of delight.

But alas, came a morn when we woke but to number

Youth's hours with the hours that can ne'er again be,

Like the maiden adrift who awoke from her slumber

To find all her jewels lost, lost in the sea.

But high burned the hopes in our bosoms when parting

Upon us a blessing beneficent fell,

And cheered was our step on Life's stern journey starting

By the God-speeds that rang from the old college bell.

No more from its place by the doorway it swingeth:

Its duty is ended, its labors are o'er;

No more to the matin prayers calling it ringeth,

For the ending of Youth's daily task—nevermore;

And hands that oft swayed it are folded to never

Lift up till Life's Angel shall sound his decree,

But the song that it sang will ring on and forever,

As long as the Sons of Loyola shall be;

And the years they will come, and the decades, and ages,
And ages to far-reaching eons will swell,
But naught shall be sweeter to poets and sages
Than the song that was sung by the old college bell.

Gone—gone are the days that with song and with story
We hallow the fairest Time brought in his flight;
But around them there hovers a halo whose glory
With each passing year grows more lustrous and bright;
And oft when deep, gathering glooms rise before us,
And along the steep journey uncertain we stray,
One hand waves a benison solemnly o'er us
And guides us aright up the starlitten way;
And oft when from dreams that were fairest we tear us,
And long-cherished hopes bid our bosoms farewell,
One voice echoes forth in full cadence to cheer us—
'Tis the sweet, hallowed voice of the old college bell.

A TRIBUTE TO WASHINGTON.

A voice like a turbulent tempest
 Rose up from the West World new;
At first 'twas a tremulous whisper,
 But it grew and it swelled and it grew,
Till over the deep it thundered,
 Sped on by a West World gale,
And it made an empire tremble
 And the cheeks of a king grow pale.

For it said: "We are tired of bondage
 To a monarch over the sea;
Our hearts are the hearts of freemen,
 And our loved land must be free;
We will none of a tyrant's scepter,
 But will build us a goodly state
Where, 'none shall rule but the humble,'
 And the lowly shall be great!"

Then forth from a myriad scabbards
 Flashed a myriad swords in the light
That burst with the dawning of freedom
 O'er the gloom of the sullen night;
And the hands that had rent their shackles
 Leapt up with the gleaming swords.
And the steel of freemen glistened
 In the ranks of the tyrant's hordes.

But they trembled at thought of their weakness,
And the hopes in their breasts grew dark;
And they yearned for the sword's unsheathing
That would touch at the quivering spark
Of hope that was not yet smothered;
When lo! like the orient sun
That bursts o'er a lingering darkness,
Flashed the sword of Washington!

O sword of the New World Spartan,
That gleamed in the dawning light
That came with the birth of freedom,
And struck at the tyrant's might,
And cheering the hopes that wavered,
Led the conquering armies on—
To thee bow a grateful people,
O sword of Washington!

In the feverish heat of the battle,
In the cheerless cold of the camp,
Where the hearts of the bravest faltered.
In the march's weary tramp,
That sword cheered the ragged heroes,
Till over the wintry sea
They drove the tyrant's minions—
And the Land of the West was free!

Then up rose a grateful people,
And they brought a signet ring;
And they cried, "All hail to the monarch!
Washington shall be king!"
But he said, "I would have no scepter;
Let us build us a goodly state,
Where 'none shall rule but the humble,'
And the lowly shall be great!"

Peace spread o'er the land her pinions,
And out of the glorious West
There rose the New World nation,
With virtue and liberty blest.
They bowed to no tyrant's scepter,
But they builded a goodly state,
Where "none shall rule but the humble,"
And the lowly shall be great!

THE HANGING OF THE SWORD.

I will hang thee, my sword, on the mouldering wall,
In the scabbard I'll sheathe thee, lest God's holy light,
Unstained and untainted, upon thee should fall,
Thou emblem of Wrong and thou weapon of Right.

Out of Evil thou sprungest, incarnate of Pride;
Oppression has whetted thy keen, gleaming blade;
And Avarice flung thee in glee by her side,
To further the aims of her gluttonous trade.

In the van of her cohorts base Tyranny bore
Thee down through the vale on her mission of hate:
'Twas she who baptized thee in innocent gore,
And the soil of our fathers with crimson did sate.

But Right snatched the steel from her insolent hand,
As in conflict they met on the red-glutted plain,
And smote her and drove her base hordes from the land,
While strewn were the slopes and the meads with her slain.

Accurs'd was the steel, born of Hatred and Hell,
With its blade ever stamped with the birthmark of shame:
But upon it the blood of a patriot fell,
And pure as the sin-shriven child it became.

Sweet, sweet was thy service, O sword of my sire!

By the hand that was righteous thou ever wert swayed!
And when Treason waved o'er us her weapon of ire,
In the scabbard ne'er sheathed was thy glittering blade!

But now I will hide thee—thy service is done:

And the rust will encrust thee and cover thee o'er,
Till the blood-stains of battle which thee are upon
Gaunt Time's wrinkled hand shall efface evermore.

God grant War is dead! Ah! but Wrong never dies:

And cankerous Passion burns deep in the breast:
But if the black visage of War should arise
On the coast, on the plain, or the mountain's tall crest,

I will snatch thee, my sword, from the mouldering wall,

I will whet thee, and temper with flame and with fire,
And then in her need if my country should call,
O serve me, sweet blade! as thou once served my sire!

THE SMITHY.

Blow! Blow! Blow!
O list to the bellows blowing,
Fanning the coals, softly glowing!
While the blacksmith stands
With his brawny hands,
Watching the metal glinting and bright,
Ready to grasp 'tween the jaws of his tongs,
When the heat in the forge has turned it to white,
While he gaily sings his favorite songs.
O gaily he sings,
And the sledge that he swings
Is beating the time
To his tuneful rhyme,
Merrily!
Merrily!

Ding! Ding! Ding!
O list to the song of the metal!
O hark to the din and the rattle,
As the smith's hammer beats
'Gainst the iron mass and sheets,
While the sparks fly away at every blow,
Scintillant, gleaming, and glinting, and bright,
Falling in showers from the metal aglow,
And filling the smithy with flakelets of light.

O gaily he swings
His sledge as he sings,
Beating the time
To his musical rhyme,
 Cheerily!
 Cheerily!

 Clang! Clang! Clang!
O list to the anvil ringing!
O hark to the blacksmith singing
 His merry song
 The whole day long,
As his hammer falls on the shapeless steel,
 Welding and beating and turning to form.
Beating it, though it never can feel,
 Like the wild sea is lashed at the will of the storm.
 O gaily he sings,
 And the sledge that he swings
 Is beating the time
 To his tuneful rhyme.
 Merrily!
 Merrily!

TO A BROKEN LUTE.

O silent effigy of Song,
Speak through thy shattered strings :
Doth cold forgetfulness belong
To the warm heart that sings?
Ah, when the poor, mute chords around
My broken lute entwine,
If in one heart one note be found,
What recompense were mine!

A LITTLE WHILE.

A little while, and then my toil is ended ;
And when my task seems long, the pathway steep,
I think of one who has before ascended
And on the quiet summit lies asleep.

A little while—and lo, the end is nighing !
Heartaches shall cease, heart-chords shall bind anew ;
Two heads shall rest where now but one is lying,
Four hands shall clasp where now there are but two.

A LIFE.

I saw her when a child at play,
 A sweet young child, so wondrous fair,
How could my heart be else than gay
 When I beheld her golden hair?
Childlike she toyed the young rose tree,
 Unblown, that in the garden stood;
And for the day I sighed when she
 Would bloom to perfect womanhood.

Time turned the child a maiden soon;
 I saw her then, her golden hair
Wreathed with the merry flowers of June;
 Ah, never June seemed half so fair,
And never flower as sweet as she,
 Just budding into womanhood:
I looked, and saw the young rose tree
 Had ventured forth a perfect bud.

I saw her on her wedding day,
 And never was a bride more fair!
I prayed that time would make their way
 As golden as the young bride's hair.
Care fled before her smile's warm glow—
 Does not the sunshine melt the snows?
I saw the young rose tree, and lo!
 Its bud had burst a perfect rose!

I saw her soon in sorrow's hour ;
 'Twas ere a twelvemonth passed, and ere,
I ween, the tropic bridal flower
 Had withered in her golden hair.
O child ! who stole thy smiles from thee?
 The gladness of thy wedding hour?
I looked upon the young rose tree,
 And saw a drooping, wasted flower.

I saw her next in death's array ;
 I knew her by her golden hair ;
All else had sorrow swept away,
 But left that mark of beauty there.
Was this the child I saw at play,
 The child with radiant smiles aglow?
The maiden of that bright June day?
 The bride of but a year ago?

I looked upon that pallid brow :
 Nay, nay, it is not she ! I swear.
I looked again and wept : for how
 Could I mistake that golden hair?
Once more I saw the young rose tree ;
 'Twas stripped of leaf and stripped of bloom ;
The withered petals swept by me,
 And, wind-tossed, drifted o'er her tomb.

THROUGH THE LONG NIGHT.

Through the long, deep night I see her,
All through the long, long night,
Moving among the shadows
With a noiseless step and light,
Smoothing my pain-tossed pillow,
Soothing my burning cheek
With her gentle touch, and kissing
My hand so weak, so weak !

Through the long, dread night I watch her
About my chamber glide ;
And if her cares should take her
For a moment from my side,
I turn on my fevered pillow
Her parting step to hear,
And I cling to her shadow, yearning
Ever to have her near.

Through the long, still night I hear her
As she moveth to and fro,
And I list to the prayer so fervent
That she murmurs soft and low—
The prayer that is breathed in whisper,
Yet is heard, I know, on high :
“Dear God,” as my cheek she kisses,
“Do not let my poor child die !”

Through the long, lone night she hovers
Like an angel round my couch,
And my pain and anguish vanish
When I feel her gentle touch;
And when my hair, all tangled,
By her soft hand is caress'd
My brow no more is fevered,
And I sweetly sink to rest.

Through the long, deep night, my mother!
All through the long, long night,
In my fitful dreams I see thee
And hear thee, spirit of light!
O vision of love, whose whisper
Maketh my anguish cease,
Through the long night thou art near me,
And thy presence bringeth peace!

And then as I rest and the vision
Still lingereth near in my dreams,
And I hear her tireless footstep,
And I feel her kiss, it seems
That I see through the far blue heavens
The Perfect One above,
Who alone hath the power to fathom
The depths of a mother's love.

WHAT MATTER?

What matter though the dreary night
With darkness should obscure my way?
Thy tender eyes—their sweet fires light
My life with never-ending day.

What matter though the way be long?
What though its path be fraught with strife?
Thy loving cheer will make me strong
To do the irksome toils of life.

What matter though the fierce winds blow
And the deep thunders loudly roll?
Thy voice, sweet love, all soft and low,
Becalms the tempest of my soul.

What matter though, with wearied brain,
I watch the day die in the West?
Thy gentle touch dispels the pain
And soothes my aching brow to rest.

And so life's golden span appears
More golden as the days pass by;
For, sweet my love! the gliding years
But add new luster to thine eye.

And when our setting sun's last rays
All lurid make the evening skies,
O then will Heaven's love-flames blaze
Forth from the love-fires of thine eyes!

THE CRY OF THE TOILER-

All through the day I work and I toil,
 Planning and building for men,
Rearing a shelter for greed-gotten spoil,
 Resting and toiling again:
And I cry: Is there never an end
 To this building for others to keep?
To this toiling and earning for others to spend?
 To this sowing for others to reap?
 O this sowing for others to reap!

Was this hand created to fill
 The purse of the haughty and proud,
Who crush and oppress me and curse me at will,
 And who feast and are merry, while loud
From my poverished tenement rise
 The voices of hunger and cold?
For my toil can not stifle the famishing cries
 At the pitiful price it is sold—
 O the pitiful price it is sold!

O I toil and I work and I toil
 From dawn till the coming of night;
For the rich and the mighty I work and I toil,
 Adding on to their riches and might;
While the pittance this toiling hand earns,

At the price of the sweat that I shed,
Back again to their gold-gluttred coffers returns,
To buy us a shelter and bread—
For my loved ones a shelter and bread.

Do the years as they come and they go,
The home of the Cræsus despoil?
Ah, no! but they bring a new sorrow and woe
To the hovel of him who must toil.
But our hopes are not smothered: they spring
In our bosoms anew, and we pray
That soon shall our toil its full recompense bring,
And oppression shall vanish for aye,
O forever and ever and aye!

THE CRY OF THE UNEMPLOYED.

Do you hear the wailing and weeping
And the moans of the weak and unfed?
Do you see the pale lips of the children
That cry for a morsel of bread?
And the babe as it nurses? a starveling,
And yet in the cradle of life!
Do you note the thin cheek of the mother
And the faltering step of the wife?

" 'Tis the home of the idler," you mutter.
And bitterness tinges your voice;
Ay, sir, 'tis the home of the idler,
But not of the idler through choice.
You shudder once more at the moaning,
And you look on the squalor again,
And you turn in your anger to curse me,
And to brand me accursed of men.

Nay, rail not in language so bitter:
Though the children are hungry and weak,
And worn is the mother and haggard,
With the flush of disease on her cheek.
More woeful my anguish and famine,
For they sap and they gnaw at my life:
'Tis the hunger of father and husband
For the comfort of children and wife.

This hand is the hand of the toiler,
And willing as aught 'neath the sun,
And skillful, and strong are its sinews—
But it toils not, for toil there is none.
I have sought and I seek through the city
But a chance for this hand once again,
And I journey the highways and byways,
But I seek and I journey in vain.

Ay, sir, there is cold and there's hunger
E'en down to the child at the breast;
But the cries that you hear, and the moaning,
Are the cries of the weak and oppress'd:
This hand—it is willing and skillful,
And if toil—honest toil—you bestow,
There shall echo the anthems of gladness,
Where now sound the wailings of woe!

GOD'S VOICE AND MAN'S.

God said: "Go forth and toil,
And lave thy brow in dew:
For none shall feast but those who toil,
And labor's sweat must steep the soil
Where fruits untended grew."

Man said: "Toil is a curse:
And from this bane released,
The sweat of slaves my fields shall nurse,
Who, toiling, moiling for my purse,
Must famish while I feast."

A WOMAN'S FAITH.

"He loves me—he loves me not;"
And the petals fluttered down
From the one bright rose she'd gathered,
And were lost 'mid the leaves of brown.

"He loves me—he loves me not;"
And she sighed, "Ah me! ah me!"
While the wind caught the falling petals
And tossed them over the lea.

"He loves me—he loves me not;"
And the crimson petals played
And floated awhile in the sunlight,
Then fluttered into the shade.

"He loves me—he loves me not;"
Then she flung the poor bud down,
And under her foot she crushed it
And hid it with leaves of brown.

"He loves me not? he loves me not?"
'Tis a false tale that you tell,
O rose, for I know my lover
Loves me, and loves me well.

"He has said it over and over,
And his love is true, I know:
For I have more faith in my lover
Than in all the flowers that grow!"

A FRAGMENT.

One day when my soul was lonely
 I searched a forgotten place,
Where woven around were the cobwebs
 Like a netting of rare old lace.

May be my soul in its longing
 Some truant solace had sought,
May be that my vagrant fingers
 Had found that nook untaught;

But I came on a mouldering packet
 That burst 'neath my tremulous clutch,
And I found 'mong its treasures a fragment—
 But it crumbled and broke at my touch.

I remembered the packet was willed me
 By a friend of my youth when he died;
But ne'er the ribbon that bound it
 Till then had my fingers untied.

I sat me down by my window,
 And the fragment I spread on my knee;
And I hastily scanned it, anxious
 To know what its tale might be.

I saw 'twas an old, old poem
 He'd penned in his earlier years:
It was yellow with time, and blotted
 And blurred with his passionate tears.

Like a Stoic I read; for 'twas buried
 So long in that mouldering spot,
The tale that it told was forgotten,
 Though the soul that inspired it was not.

But a breath came up from my garden
 As I paused on a liquid rhyme;
And it seemed 'twas the breath of a summer
 I had known once on a time:

A summer whose days were golden
 With the glow of his tender love,
A summer whose bliss, if eternal,
 Must have rivaled heaven's above.

Then swift came my thoughts upon me
 Like the violent rushing of waves,
And out of the past rose visions
 Like ghosts from neglected graves.

Of a sudden my soul was awakened,
 And memories came as I read,
Such as come when you gaze at the garment
 Of one you have loved, and is dead.

THE POEM.

"Sweet was the breath of the even;
 Soft fell the gleams of the stars;
Bright were the eyes of my lady
 As we sang by the old meadow bars.

"The song died away in the cedars,
And a touch of her hand I stole,
When forth burst the ravishing torrents
From love's Aganippe—my soul.

"I spake—could my bosom contain it,
That love it had prisoned so long?
Ask if the robin is silent
When his soul is o'erflowing with song!

"I spake—and my tremulous whisper
Into passionate eloquence grew;
I repeated the old, sweet story,
But to her and to me it was new.

"I paused; and the word was trembling
On her lips that she strove to say;
And low bent my ear to hear it,
When she softly whispered * * *" But stay!

Why was thy hand so reckless
When it touched this spot, O Time?
And why did his tears in falling
Forever blot out his rhyme?

May be it was best her answer
Mine eyes were denied to see;
May be it was best his secret
Forever a secret should be.

I sighed, and the crumbling fragment
Went fluttering down to my feet;
But I think 'twas the tear of an angel
That made it incomplete.

MY TROUBADOUR.

Sing me some sweet love-song to-night,
The sweetest that you know;
A tender ballad of the past,
A song of long ago.
O sweetly sang the troubadour
His tender lay divine,
But never voice a love-song breathed
That could compare with thine!

My brow is wearied with the toils
Of life's all-busy mart;
A burning grief has singed my soul
And withered up my heart:
But ah, a raptured tenderness
Lives in thy voice to-night,
And, singing, thou wilt soothe my soul
And cloy it with delight.

Be thou my troubadour, my sweet!
And sing to none but me;
And, listening, I will feel the fires
Of ancient minstrelsy;
Until their kindling warmth shall make
My heart with love-flames glow,
And touching, sacred like, my soul,
Shall purge it of its woe.

Then sing to me some sweet old song—
 A love-song of the past:
O would the rapt forgetfulness
 It brings would always last!
But ah, I find full recompense
 In that sweet voice of thine:
The love that prompts thy tender strain
 Is fathomless—like mine!

LINES.

When Esther smiles it seems there comes the June-time,
Laden with sweets;
And night—deep night!—before the golden noon-time
Swift retreats;

The winter blast adown my chimney blowing
Ceaseth to blow;
The clouds dissolve, and by her smiles' warm glowing
Melteth the snow;

With gradual voice the merry bird is singing
Down in the reeds;
And thyme-scents come, their sensuous wavelets bringing
Over the meads;

For on her lips the smile of gladness playing
Maketh my heart
A world of joy, with only June-time staying,
Never to part!

And so my life a summer's day, ne'er weary,
Ceaseless beguiles;
For there can be no night, no winters dreary,
When Esther smiles.

THE SHEPHERDESS' SONG.

Awake, my song, for the day gives warning,
Bright in the east is the star of morning,
On the quiv'ring grass the dew is shining,
While for one I love my heart is pining—

My merry shepherd lad!

I await his pipe far my heart is lonely;
I await his answering song, but only
From the drowsy crags the echoes answer,
Save down in the reeds a piping dancer,

But not my shepherd lad!

O where have thy vagrant flocks been straying,
And why is thy tune so long delaying?

My merry shepherd lad!

Awake, my song, for the dawn's a-breaking,
Down in the vale are the birds awaking,
By the mountain hut is the watchdog baying,
But what is the song of my love delaying?

My merry shepherd lad!

Hark! what sweets to my ears are creeping?
'Tis his merry pipe as he comes a-leaping
Down from the steeps with his sweet love story,
While the bursting sun sheds a golden glory

Around my shepherd lad!

O where have thy vagrant flocks been straying,
And why was thy kiss so long delaying?

My own true shepherd lad!

BARCAROLLE.

Rest thee, my gondolier,
And drift thy barge but slowly;
Pause, for her song I hear—
And my lady's song is holy!
O'er the responsive strings
Her soft brown hand is sweeping.
And her song the night wind brings,
With its dreams, and wails, and weeping,
How doth each cadence cry
Like a soul in anguish yearning!
For me her warm lips sigh,
And for her my heart is burning.
Rest thee, my gondolier,
Here where the reeds are clinging;
Hush! for her voice I hear—
The voice of my lady singing!

Rest thee, my gondolier,
And let thy barge go drifting:
For the gentle song I hear
My soul to heaven is lifting.
O would it were clasped in mine—
The hand that wakes the viol!
But its notes and her song divine—
They teach me self-denial!

From the sea the winds begin
To roll the lazy surges;
Let the pilgrim waves throb in
O'er the gondola's low verges!
Rest thee, my gondolier,
Here where the reeds are clinging;
Hush! for her voice I hear—
The voice of my lady singing!

BOAT SONG.

Away, my bark, o'er the waters glide,
 With a la, la, la, and a heigh-la-ho!
For thou bearest me to my lady's side,
 With a la, la, la, and a heigh-la-ho!
My heart is light and the moon is bright—
But what care I for the moon to-night?
For my lady's gentle eyes will be
Stars and the moon and the sun to me.
Yo-ho! when their gleams upon me shine
My soul will glow with a warmth divine!
 Then away, my bark, o'er the waters go,
 With a la, la, la, and a heigh-la-ho!

Away, my bark, o'er the waters fly,
 With a la, la, la, and a heigh-la-ho!
For I come my lady's window nigh,
 With a la, la, la, and a heigh-la-ho!
O my heart is gay for the beacon light
In her latticed window gleameth bright.
Yo-ho! she has heard my merry song
As my gay-decked bark goes gliding along;
And she beckons now from her open door;
Then splash! and splash! O my tardy ear.
 And away, my bark, o'er the waters go,
 With a la, la, la, and a heigh-la-ho!

MAURINE.

I dip my oar in the dark bayou,
I look the vine-clung lattice through,
And there behold my love so true,
 Maurine! Maurine! Maurine!
The sweet magnolia sighs with me,
I moor my bark by the cypress tree,
And my guitar I touch to thee,
 Maurine! Maurine! Maurine!
 The woodbine, trailing
 Thy lattice railing,
Conceals thine eyes so blue, Maurine!
 Nay, do not hide thee,
 Come sit beside me,
We'll drift the dark bayou, Maurine!

Let me but stroke thy glossy hair,
Let me but kiss thy hand so fair,
What with my bliss could then compare?
 Maurine! Maurine! Maurine!
The stars reflect in the dark bayou,
They found their gleams in thine eyes so blue.
O come, we'll drift in my canoe,
 Maurine! Maurine! Maurine!
 The woodbine, trailing
 Thy lattice railing,

Conceals thine eyes so blue, Maurine!
Nay do not hide thee,
Come sit beside me,
We'll drift the dark bayou, Maurine!

SHE SANG TO ME.

She sang to me in the moonlight
A quaint old southern tune,
And I know not which was softer,
Her voice or the Tampa moon;
But I know her song was sweeter
Than the sweetest breath of June.

A guitar she touched, but softly,
And my oars kept time to her lay,
While her light cadenza quivered
On her lips ere it tripped away,
And the moss-bound cypress answered
As it souged and dipped in the bay.

She sang to me, and the music,
As the southern moon hung o'er,
And her mellow voice was echoed
By the swamps on the Tampa shore.
Brought a calm to my troubled bosom
It never had known before.

Alas, that it must have ended!
But now I am far away,
And my heart is filled with a longing
No voice hath power to allay,
Till I find in my soul an echo
Of that song she sang on the bay.

DONALD SO TRUE.

How can I say farewell to thee?
Donald, my Donald, so true!
When parting's all but death to me,
Donald, my Donald, so true!
Thy ship is lying in the bay;
Ah, when it carries thee away
No more will Moray's hills be gay,
Donald, my Donald, so true!
Ah, thou art all of heav'n to me,
Donald, my Donald, so true!
How can I say farewell to thee?
Donald, my Donald, so true!

How can I say farewell to thee?
Donald, my Donald, so true!
Though knowing thou'lt return to me,
Donald, my Donald, so true!
My tears, alas! my cheek shall burn,
My heart shall bleed, my soul shall yearn,
Till thou to Moray wilt return,
Donald, my Donald, so true!
Ah, thou art all of heav'n to me,
Donald, my Donald, so true!
How can I say farewell to thee?
Donald, my Donald, so true!

MARJORIE.

The woodbine sheds its sweet perfumes
Where thick the brambles grow;
The edelweiss on mountains blooms
Amid a waste of snow;
But blossomed in this life of mine
A flower more fair to see
Than flower of snow or heather vine—
'Twas beauteous Marjorie.

I met her in the south-land when
The summer sun went down;
I had not dreamed of love till then,
Nor dreamed of eyes so brown.
Forth from her eyes a mellow light
Burst like the dawn on me,
And from my soul drove out the night—
Those eyes of Marjorie.

I know not now the words I said
To praise her hazel eyes:
I only know her cheeks were red
As any sunset skies;
And though her graceful brow was white
And wondrous fair to see,
Her hair was like the somber night—
The hair of Marjorie.

Her lips were redder than the rose
That lay upon her breast:
And yet her hand was like the snows
Upon the mountain's crest.
Her mellow voice, soft-whispered, filled
My soul with ecstasy:
And how her touch my being thrilled!
The touch of Marjorie.

We talked of beauty, wealth and fame—
All were beside me there!
I chided her upon her name,
And yet I truly swear,
No clime a fairer child could claim,
Nor sweeter maid than she,
Nor sweeter maid have sweeter name
Than simple Marjorie.

Alas, when ends a brief delight,
How bitter is the pain!
I went far from those eyes so bright,
And darkness came again;
And not a star was in the skies,
Not one fair star for me,
Save the sweet memory of her eyes—
The eyes of Marjorie.

Now often to the sunny land
My thoughts unbidden turn;
And for the touch of her small hand—
That snow-white hand!—I yearn:
And when my soul is filled with gloom
Her eyes I sometimes see,
And night dissolves and sun-gleams come
At thought of Marjorie

A KENTUCKY SUNRISE.

Faint streaks of light, soft murmurs, sweet
Meadow-breaths, low winds, the deep gray
Yielding to crimson, a lamb's bleat,
Soft-tinted hills, a mockbird's lay,
And the red Sun brings forth the Day.

A KENTUCKY SUNSET.

The great Sun dies in the west; gold
And scarlet fill the skies; the white
Daisies nod in repose; the fold
Welcomes the lamb; larks sink from sight;
The long shadows come, and then—Night.

THE ROSE AND THE THORN.

I seek my garden for the rose
That blossomed in the blushing morn;
But lo, the twilight gleams disclose
A bud of all its petals shorn,
And 'neath it frowns the naked thorn!

THE WINTER'S TALE.

What is the tale the Winter tells,
With his falling snow
And his winds that blow?
"I place my blight on glens and dells,
I lay the meadows bare and waste,
I strip the heather on the fells
And check the torrent in its haste;
I choke the river as it flows,
I make the highlands desolate,
I wind the forests round with snows
And mark with ruin man's estate.
Away ye imps of wind and snow,
Across the land my banner fling;
Over the vales and highlands go,
And tell all nature I am king!"

What is the tale the Winter tells,
With his cutting wind
And his frosts unkind?
"I know where cruel famine dwells,
Where want prevails, where wail the weak;
I hang their eaves with icicles
And round their doors I dance and shriek;
I fan to flame the hectic flush,
Gaunt hunger sharpens at my breath,
I seek the sick and faint, and hush

Their moanings with the touch of death.
Away ye imps of wind and snow,
Across the land my banner fling;
Over and down the chimneys blow,
And tell the people I am king!"

THOU ART SO FAIR.

Thou art so fair the weakling pen
Grows useless when it would compare
Thy charms with those of maids and men—
Thou art so fair!
And faltering song falls on the air
In feeble accents. Maid, O when
My soul in Heaven's sweet notes shall share,
And song in all its fulness ken
Of flawless measure, then and there
Thy charms I'll sing—but not till then—
Thou art so fair!

I LOVE BUT THEE.

I love but thee! Life's climax nears,
And Time has set his brand on me;
And yet, through all the changeful years,
I love but thee!
Look, look! Beyond the peaceful sea
How red the setting sun appears!
Ah, may our lives' declining be
As peaceful, with the shining meres
Reflecting Heaven's bright canopy,
Unclouded by a mist of tears—
I love but thee!

LOW, LOW.

Low, low,
Over the grassy lea
Cometh the wind at break of day,
Cometh to you and me,
Fresh with the scent of the fragrant hay,
Bringing the sweets of the new-blown flowers
Fraught with the dew of night's still hours,
Low, low,
Over the grassy lea,
Over the mead where the daisies grow,
Cometh to you and me.

Low, low,
Out of the forest deep
Cometh the wind at noon of day,
Cometh from wood asleep,
Where the great old oaks so grand and gray
Bow and nod at the will of the breeze—
O who can read the dreams of the trees?—
Bringing the cool of the forest's shade,
Bearing the scents of the rose-fraught glade,
Low, low,
Out of the forest deep
Cometh so languid, soft and slow,
Cometh from wood asleep.

Low, low,
Up from the crystal stream
Cometh the wind at eventide,
When the glowing fireflies gleam;
While clinging e'er like a loving bride
The voice of the falls is brought along,
As she doleful sings her ceaseless song.

Low, low,
Cometh, when fireflies gleam,
The wind and his bride from far below,
Up from the crystal stream.

Low, low,
Out of the tangled wild
Cometh the wind at dead of night,
Like the wail of a long lost child!
Coming at times like a voice of fright,
Oft as deep as the organ's swell,
Sad as the notes of a funeral knell,
Low, low,
Out of the tangled wild,
Weeping and sighing the night winds blow,
Like the wail of a long lost child!

AUTUMN.

The Autumn winds are wailing—sadly wailing!
The woods are fraught with moaning and with sighs;
In gullies deep the fallen leaves are trailing,
The somber clouds have darkened all the skies.

The maple groves are filled with yellow glory;
The sumac leaves have turned to red and gold;
While stands the stately oak, all gnarled and hoary,
Guarding the forest like a knight of old.

The lark no longer sings down in the meadow;
The swallow skims no more across the lea;
Nor robin trills within the grove's deep shadow,
And all the land is dismal as can be.

O tell me, Nature, wherefore all this sadness?
O tell me, woodlands, why is all this woe?
And tell me, meadows, where is all your gladness,
And why, O winds, ye wail so sad and low?

"Alas! the land is full of moans and sighing,"
The wind replied a-coming o'er the wold;
"For all of Nature weeps for Summer dying,
And mourns and mourns—the Year is growing old!"

Ah, thus with life when it is fast declining,
And silver hairs are woven 'mong the gold:
For all the past we never cease repining,
And sigh to think that we are growing old!

DEATH OF DAY.

Toll, toll, toll! rang the Vesper bell,
For the Day was dying;
Time's cruel spear fell,
And in its flying
Pierced his heart
Like a dart
Pierces the chamois fleet,
That leaps
O'er rugged steeps,
Then falls at its slayer's feet.

His heart was a-bleeding;
And his blood
Poured forth in resistless flood;
And far o'er the Western sky,
Far, far on high,
Its crimson was a-spreading.

The Day on his lowly bed
Lay moaning and sighing;
Soon the West-winds came and said
The prayers for the dying;
And then far,
Far on high,
An angel lit the evening star—
The taper of the sky.

Knell, knell, knell!
Rang the Vesper bell,
 For the Day was dead;
 Then with mantles of mourning over them spread,
 Far o'er the land the Shadows fled,
As messengers, to tell
 That Day at last was dead.

Then like a loving child,
With a whisper soft and mild,
 Pale Twilight came to the West;
 And with fair arms young and strong
 Clasped him to her breast
 And held him long;
 While the Forest sighed
 For the Day that had died;
And, as the dark mantle over them crept,
The Heavens wept,
 Shedding their dewy tears
 Like an aged man weeping o'er vanished years.

Then the angels, weeping,
Gazed on the dead sweetly sleeping;
And far, far on high
They hung the flickering tapers of the sky.

Came with a solemn tread
 The black-robed Hours,
 Their mourning-weeds fringed with the gleams of
 the stars;
Softly a pall drew they over the dead,
 And then with footsteps light,
 While through the gloom and the dim
 The Vesper bell
 Tolled its parting knell,
 They took him and they buried him
 Deep in the tomb of Night.

A THOUGHT.

Tender and sweet were the words that he said
Over the dust of the peaceful dead,
Soothing the hearts of the weeping;
The casket was sprinkled—each drop seemed a tear—
And the clouds from the censer rose over the bier
Where the beautiful child lay a-sleeping.

The mist, as I listened, was swept from my eyes,
And it seemed that I saw through the veil of the skies,
Over which fleecy cloudlets were sweeping;
And there in the far-away land of the blest,
Reclining serene on the Bosom of Rest,
The beautiful child lay a-sleeping.

Then the presence I felt of a thought-angel near,
And a whisper he tenderly breathed in my ear:
“Ah, wherefore this sorrow and weeping?
O banish thy grief, and let sorrowing cease,
For there on the heavenly Bosom of Peace
The beautiful child lies a-sleeping.”

* * * * *

By the roses o'ergrown on the slope of the hill
There's a little low mound, all peaceful and still,
And round it the ivies are creeping:
'Tis there that they bore her 'mid weeping away—
There, waiting the dawn of the Judgment Day,
The beautiful child lies a-sleeping.

GOD-SEEKING.

I seek Him through sun and shadows,
Through the mystic shadows,
Over the meadows,
Through marish and hollow,
When evening comes and still is the voice of the marts:
For Him my soul hungers and thirsts and longs and starts
To fly away like the swift-winged swallow,
But it flutters to earth again, for my soul is callow, callow!

Ah, in the twilight,
In the mystic twilight,
Sometime—the sky bright
With rays refracted—
Ere the intangible darkness shall blind mine eyes,
I will find Him, and in yonder Elysian skies,
Full-fledged with the sweet grace He giveth,
My soul shall soar away where He forever liveth!

LEGEND OF THE WHITE ROSE.

In the evening-tinted garden, near the convent gray and
olden,
 Bloomed a Rose and bloomed a Lily, nodding to the
 languid breeze ;
One the glowing sky reflected fringed with purple marge
 and golden,
 Wooded the sun's pale gleams the other, as they straggled
 through the trees.

On them smiled the young Narcissus from the hederal
 carpet peeping,
 While the honeyed Thyme and Clover flung their
 odorous wavelets round ;
But they woke not from their dreaming, neither roused
 they from their sleeping,
 For it seemed they dreamt and slumbered, gazing on
 the ivied ground.

Softly from the chapel stealing came the sound of Sisters
 singing,
 And across the fragrant garden swept a sweet, melodious
 air ;
Lower drooped its head the Lily ; but the Rose, still nodding,
 swinging,
 Heeded not the music, bearing on its wings the Sisters'
 prayer.

When at last the hymn was ended and the answering Echo
sounded

From afar the last responses, to the Lily spake the Rose:
"Fairest Lily, why so pensive? Is thy tender heart thus
wounded

By a simple strain of music touching it at evening's
close?"

Then unto the Rose the Lily spake with fervor and emotion:

"Sweet my Rose! I heard the fluttering that the wings
of music gave,

And I sought the prayers they bore me, drank them in with
deep devotion,

For to-morrow I will breathe them from a Sister's
lowly grave."

Spake the Rose then to the Lily: "Envied Lily! Sweetest
flower

Ever Nature's garden yielded! Would thy sweets were
on my bloom!

For I yearn for such devotion that I might for one brief hour
Breathe a prayer in the Churchyard from the Sister's
humble tomb."

Spake no more the Rose and Lily; all about was hushed;
and nigher

Drew the eve its grayish mantle; but the Rose was
wrapt in thought.

Soon a gentle footfall roused her: lo, there walked a Sister
by her,

On her beads devoutly counting prayers with deepest
fervor fraught.

Low the Rose then drooped and listened as the Sister oft
repeated
In a whispered tone and fervent o'er and o'er an earnest
prayer;
Heard the Rose with rapt attention till the Aves were
completed,
Drinking in each word, and breathing e'er a perfume
wondrous rare.

Soon the Sister left, and lower drooped the Rose in medita-
tion,
While the Lily and the Ivy and the kindred Eglantine
Looked into her face and wondered; for the odorous ex-
halation
Of her dream made wondrous fragrant all in Nature's
beauteous shrine.

Spent the night in meditation thus the Rose; and when the
breaking
Day came with its dewdrops sparkling like a million
lustrous eyes
Peeping forth from leaf and blossom, lo! the garden in its
waking
Looked upon the Rose's beauty -looked in wonder and
surprise!

For her blushes all were vanished, and in robes of perfect
whiteness,
Purer even than the Lily blooming by her, she was
dight;
And the dewdrops on her petals shone with wondrous sheen
and brightness:
Never star revealed such splendor through the mystic
veil of night!

Came again the Sister praying, and in silent admiration
Looked upon the Rose's beauty, breathed the sweets of
her perfume;
Then she plucked the Rose and Lily, and still wrapt in
meditation,
To the Churchyard bore and placed them side by side
upon a tomb.

All day long the spot was laden with their odorous ex-
halation,
As they breathed anew the prayers they had heard the
night before;
When the twilight came, tho' withered, still their fragrant
meditation
Rose in odorous waves to heaven—for the Sister's
prayers they bore.

Morning came, and to the Churchyard came again the
Sister bringing
For the grave a Rose and Lily, each in snowy raiment
dight;
For the Rose's kindred listened to the Sister's prayers and
singing,
And they, too, lost their blushes and were changed to
spotless white.

Far the White Rose breathed her prayers, far her odorous
devotion,
Till her beauty and her fragrance over all the land were
spread;
Now, whene'er the peasant sees her he will whisper with
emotion:
"Ah, the flower of wondrous beauty! she is praying for
the dead!"

AN ABANDONED PLACE.

A field all fallow :
Sedge and the cockle grown wild o'er the way ;
The riotous thistle and weeds
Glutting the soil with their seeds ;
The gaunt lynx seeking her hapless prey ;
The loathed toad and unclean
Dwelling the rush among ;
And the water-snake darting its forked tongue
Out of the pond with its scum of green.

A house tumbling to ruin :
The roof caved in, the gables burst out ;
The windows broken, the lawn unmown ;
The fallen fence with weeds o'ergrown ;
Vines run mad all round about ;
The half-wild swine, famished and lean,
Housed on the wet-warped floor,
Where oft in the gay dance gliding o'er,
Dainty feet, proud feet have been.

Art thou the field all fallow?
Art thou the house all ruin?
O my heart! O my soul!
Lest it be, beware!
Lest it be, prepare!

With plow and blade make thy glebe all fair;
And thy house make whole
With the tools God gives—as sharp and true
As ever a skillful workman knew—
And ruin and riot and rank decay
Shall steal like the coward wolf away,
Finding a master there.

THAT WAS MAY.

This is the same sweet spot,
And yet some change is here:
Dead is the gray old elm,
And the brook runs not so clear;
And the house, with its circling porches,
Has fallen to sad decay:
But this is the drear November,
And that was the rose-sweet May.

Here you and I once paused
Beneath the mellow moon;
And we sang a song together,
But it ended ah, too soon!
Now naught save the wind is singing,
And the skies are dull and gray:
But this is the chill November,
And that was the fragrant May.

I touched your slender hand
And looked down in your eyes;
But a moist hung on your lashes,
And your lips were sweet with sighs.
Where now is that hand so tender?
Like the mist it stole away:
But this is the dark November,
And that was the golden May.

This is the same sweet spot—
But nay, 'tis not the same:
Your hand stretched not to greet me,
Your lips called not my name;
Your voice rang not o'er the meadows
As I came up the tangled way:
But this is the bleak November,
And that—ah, that was May!

IN SOLITUDE.

Here let me by the limpid stream
Court Solitude, where noisy mart
Finds no response, but the pure art
Of Nature has its reign supreme.
Far from the mad world's stern decrees
A panting fugitive I fly,
While wan Care, with her haggard eye,
Who dogged me long, shrinks, turns and flees.

And lo! from every nook appear
A myriad Fancies: light of wing
And fleet of foot they come and bring
The ghosts of many a vanished year.
I frown not, though their nimble feet
Bring forth the satyr and the faun
To sport across the woodland lawn
And dance upon its emerald sheet.

Here Melancholy sits, sweet maid
Of pallid brow and flowing hair;
The wood nymphs found her in her lair
And dragged her hither, half afraid,
Half shrinking, for the satyrs dance
In glee before her drooping eyes,
And though her pale lips part with sighs,
Their revel drowns her utterance.

Afar off, down the mystic vale
A reed-voice cometh: from the stream
The god Pan snatched it, and the dream
Of mellow sound that steeps the gale
Takes form, and lo! a lovely maid—
The pensive Muse—comes forth and lives,
And while to Song her soul she gives,
Sits dreaming in the somber shade.

The gods have heard: they come, and prone
They cast them at her feet; then bear
Her to the sun-tipped peak, and there
They place her on a golden throne.
She smiles; and bard and poet throng
With wild harp to her feet, and pour
Their rhapsodies of love and war
In one unbroken burst of song

Upon the madly throbbing air.
But why, sweet, heavenly Muse, rejoice?
Too soon the arch-angelic Voice
Shall falter at the touch of Care;
Shall cringe at Mammon's throne, and creep
A groveling worm. Alas, too soon
Thy fair Parnassus shall be strewn
With rankling weeds from steep to steep,

And heavenly sweets of sound and song
That flood the cloud-protruding peaks,
Shall drown beneath the stench and shrieks
Of gluttled vulture-beasts that throng
The carcass of dead Art. And lo,
The clamorous shouts and war's alarms,
And clash and crash of Trojan arms
Grow faint and fainter. Lost the glow

Of Orpheus' lyre, that made its slave
The dumb of Nature. Broken lies
The oaten stop, while yonder flies,
In haste, Silenus to his cave.
And he who did the realms explore
Infernal, lifting from the throng
Of damned fiends, a heaven-lit song,
Seeks his accustomed way no more.

Apollo's lute is stilled; the hair
Is trailing loose; and the sublime
Full Voice that soared in God's own clime,
Is lost upon the stifling air.
Sluggish the Avon's flow: the roar
Of wild Materialism's tide
O'erwhelms th' immortal Voice that sighed
And sang upon its shelving shore.

And lo! upon Parnassus' slope
A myriad pigmies strive to climb;
The sweet narcissus and the thyme
They wound and crush as wild they grope
With eyes benighted up the steeps:
They falter, fall; and at the base,
With anguished voice and ghastly face,
Implore the goddess as she sleeps

Upon the summit. Is it sleep?
Or is it death? If sleep, O haste
The hour of waking! Let us taste
Once more from out the hallowed deep
Of thy sweet cup the nectar'd draught
Which made the very gods with joy
Inebriate! Awake: destroy
With thy all-withering scorn the craft

And trade that barter in thy name
The black, distorted infamies
From which hell's shameless legate flies,
Unused to such degree of shame!
Awake: dispel the hideous dream!
Cast off the nightmare that has bound
Thee in its chains of darkness! Sound
Thy dulcet strings, and let the gleam

Of thy sweet eyes shine forth again
Amid the waste that heaven may come
Once more to earth, and drive the gloom
And damp from out thy sacred fane!
Awake: behold the leaden sky,
O'erspread with mists! Touch but thy string,
And monstrous gloom shall all take wing
Before thy melting melody.

She waketh not! Her sacred lyre
Responds no more! It is not sleep!—
Sweet Muse!—For o'er yon golden steep
The famished vulture marks his gyre;
The gaunt she-wolf with skulking tread
Comes forth her ghastly prey to seek,
And with long howl and hideous shriek,
She tears the entrails from the dead

To make her ghoulish feast, the while
The vulture swoops upon his prey
And holds mad revel. Woe the day
When foul infection warped the smile
Which wrapped those steeps in heaven-lit skies
And filled with such celestial hymn
The slopes, it drew the cherubim,
Mistaking earth for Paradise!

And yet, methinks the vulture-beast
But feeds upon corporeal parts;
The spirit lives; the God of Arts
Looks down upon th' unholy feast
From His starlitten fields, and weeps;
For there, far o'er Parnassus' hight,
In Splendor Beatific dight,
He holds His reign; nor dies; nor sleeps;

But breathes into the glowing soul
The fires of His own symphony,
And bears her up that she may see
The Source Divine, and catch the roll
Of heavenly harmonies, and hear
The notes eternal wing their flight
Majestic through th' Elysian light
From farthest orb to farthest sphere.

There rules the Destiny of Song,
And guides the faltering wings to rise
Through the vast blue expanse of skies,
And opes the lips that full and strong
Breathe forth the choral strains that roll
Reverberant on Ethereal shores:
'Tis God's own hand; 'tis His that pours
The heavenly essence in the soul,

And lips ordains with seething fires
To rise o'er Splendor's steep and sing,
And hands anoints to smite the string
In union with celestial choirs.
O Muse Divine! Eternal Muse!
If but the craven bird and beast
On yonder Mount make ghastly feast
Of Thy fair prototype, diffuse

Into our barren souls a breath
Of Thy eternal hymn, all pure,
All sweet, that then we may endure
This life, forgetting death is death.
Song is not dead! Throw off the pall!
He lives who taught the bard to sing,
And gave his soul the silken wing
To soar in realms Ethereal;

And gave him ear to catch the flight
Of His celestial strains, and eyes
To pierce the blue of azured skies
And gaze upon Elysium's light.
Song is not dead! God lives; and He
Is all of Song and all of Art,
Who breathes into the throbbing heart
The fires of His divinity.

It is the world gone mad! and blind
To the One Beautiful, she gropes
In darkness up Parnassus' slopes,
And faltering, falls. O Muse, all kind!
Give her but sight that she may see,
Give her but sound that she may hear.
And make her strong to do and bear
That she may scale the heights to Thee!

But she will not! And lo, the night
Comes on without a twilight; hoarse
Bloweth the wind; the river's course
Obscures in mists; a palling blight
O'erhangs the fading Mount; nor sound
Of pastoral reed nor shepherd's note
Is heard, nor heavy thyme-scents float
Adown the vale; but the lean hound

Bays at the feverish moon; and Woe,
Gaunt-cheeked and hollow-eyed, and torn
Her hair, comes forth to weep and mourn
And pour her tears in silence. Grow
The dense shadows denser. I strive
For utterance; I moan; I sigh;
But through the mists can only cry,
With trembling voice, "Forgive! Forgive!"

THE NATIVITY.

I

My flocks were safe within their wonted keep,
When in the East I saw rise up a Star—
Most wondrous Star!—and felt the midnight hour,
Throbbing with peace, in bliss exultant steep
The world, and heard majestic chorals sweep
With sound the joyous universe as far
As the soul's sense could reach: as though some power
Of Dream were on, without the power of Sleep.
I started from my wakeful watch, and bore
Me forth: a hand reached down (though by mine eyes
Unseen, intangible, but felt,) and o'er
Judea's hills, beneath the arching skies,
It led me on, nor me released until
I stood within a beast's mean domicile.

II

I paused beside the lowly manger where
An Infant lay, newborn, upon the straw,
In swaddling garments wrapped. Anear I saw
The Wise Men prone in heaven-ascending prayer:
I looked, and lo! the Child was wondrous fair.
August, serene: I felt the base earth draw
Me down in homage, and with reverent awe
I hid mine eyes, such sight unfit to share.

Then rose I up and said: So poor abode,
And yet a Child of such divinity—
Is this some holy prophet sent of God?
Peace! peace! (the Wise Men whispered;) it is He,
A Prophet, yea: but of Jehovah willed,
The Prophecy of every age fulfilled.

III

Omnipotent, eternal, infinite,
Such attributes are His if this is He,
(I said,) Who holds the universe in fee
For His creative touch; and in Whose might
The earth, the sun, the countless orbs of light—
Successive chain of pond'rous majesty—
Are but as bubbles, and what less are we!
Weaker than I, and I a parasite
To that which came from nothing by His hand,
If He this Infant on the meanly straw,
Doth He not His infinity transcend
In alien clay to wrap His boundless awe?
How can it be? (I cried.) Peace! (came reply,)
Behold the Child, and ask not How, but Why!

GETHSEMANE.

Infinite Sorrow pouring forth Thy tears!
Lest we behold our sorrows magnified,
And with despairing lips blaspheme the years
That smite us sore, when but the flesh hath cried,
Of its own weakness, through th' impatient brine
Of still less patient eyes, come we in thought
To Thy grief's garden, Lord! and unto Thine
Our fullest woe how shrinketh it to naught!
Thou infinite—we finite: Thou for all .
The myriad myriads of Thy heart's love weeping,
With love that hath no limit: we but fall
Beneath one stroke of grief. Behold the deeping
Of our soul's anguish, Christ! and teach us blend
Our tears with Thine, full patient, to the end!

EASTER MORN.

Bright casque and helmet glitter round the tomb,
As to and fro the mailed sentries glide,
Their vigil keeping near the Crucified;
The tremulous stars with ghostly gleams illumine
Their polished steel, and tint each nodding plume;
With ribald laugh His torn flesh they deride,
And jest in whisper at His spear-rent side,
Till dawn, approaching, melts the leaden gloom.
Over the distant hills the glorious morn
In splendor sends a myriad-tinted ray,
When lo! the hand, by cruel nails all torn,
The tomb unseals, the great stone rolls away,
And, guards confounding, through the yielding door
The risen Christ comes forth to die no more.

AUDUBON.

I hear not ever a bird in melody
 Pour forth its little soul upon the air ;
 I see not ever a droning insect bear
Its wings in dubious course, nor carry me
Through field and forest, where God's minstrelsy
 In bounteous joy drowns every voice of care ;
 I smell not ever a blossom's perfumes rare,
But comes a thought, immortal sage, of thee !

These were his poets, these his books : and each
Taught him its secrets that he us might teach ;
 And that his labors were not spent in vain,
Attest ye winds, that through the forest fly,
Attest ye children of the clear blue sky,
 Singing his praise in God's most beauteous fane !

DREAMS.

I dreamed there were no dreams, but life was all
A stern reality, with toil and sweat
And feverish unrest. No castled wall,
With groaning portcullis, and turrets set
Upon its lofty hight, was builded in
A visionary Spain; nor glinting stream
Flashed from a silver fount; but all was din
Of marts, and buzzing wheels, and hissing steam.
And then mankind, bent with its heavy years,
Went quickly to its grave, and hoary brow
Yearned not for Youth's sweet Fount; while Pity's tears
Ran down unpitied. Cried I then, "O thou
Accursed world, hemmed in by hell's foul moat,
Thou art all bane, with ne'er an antidote!"

MOB-FURY.

Infernal Rage that killest in Justice' name,
Her bench usurping, and with perjured hand
Holding her sacred scales: shall this sweet land
Rise never above thy black, rapacious shame?
Thy savage deeds glow scarlet with hell's flame,
And in thy murderous soul lay bare the brand
Of foul hypocrisy: for thou darest stand
Before thy God and pure intent proclaim.

How long in servile impotence, O State,
Wilt groan beneath these hellish infamies,
Thine own power mocking? Lift thee up! Be brave!
Thy laws make strong and prompt to operate.
Swift in their course with him who law defies,
And show the world thou'rt not the Rabble's slave!

THE TEMPEST'S VOICE.

I saw the night come down the mountain side,
Draped in the vesture of black majesty:
O'er sunless tracts the weltering clouds surged by,
Dissolved, and formed anew, like a vast tide
Shore lashing. The long thunders rose and died;
And Jove tumultuous from his throne on high
Hurled his fierce shafts athwart the vap'rous sky,
Till the huge mountains trembled terrified.
With roaring multitudinous then woke
The storm: rocks, crags, by its rude hand were swayed,
And stalwart pines were leveled by its stroke,
As falls the wheat before the reaper's blade;
While from the ruins came articulate:
"How great Thou art, all-potent God! how great!"

THE SOUL'S PROGRESS.

Methought I died: and from its keep set free
My eager soul swept into Paradise.

There saw I God: and God my spirit's eyes
Did contemplate, and all in full degree
Her gloried faculties. Him did I see,

Even as He is, enthroned in the skies,
Eternal, vast, omnipotent, most-wise,
And all His radiant Light environed me.

Nearer I drew: and straight, without desire—

Even as the seed light findeth, being sown—

Each new beholding some new wisdom bore;
But though in endless progress high and higher
Clomb I in wisdom toward God's beauteous throne,
He grew the glorious mystery the more.

MOONRISE: AMONG THE MOUNTAINS.

Infinite night among th' eternal steeps!

But lo, above the peaks the great white moon
Lifts up in splendor. The black gorges, hewn
By flood and tempest, yawn below, while sleeps
The snow upon the summits. Gradual deeps

The tranced quiet on the rocks o'erstrewn
These spectral slopes, till the lost senses swoon
Beneath the awful hush. Far down there leaps
The seething torrent in the gaunt abyss,

Gnawing the mountain's entrails. Soul do thou
In yon capacious light behold the bliss

Presaging thine! forgetting not, as now
Beneath thee gapes the chasm terrible,
If heaven is near, how deep, how black is hell!

THE TWO CHILDREN.

They both were children: one the pleasant lane
Ran down and chased the gold-winged butterfly;
The other limped the road with many a sigh:
The one was Joy, the other—it was Pain;
And each did sing: *this* in a minor strain,
That filled the air with blithesome melody;
And each did beck me follow her; but I,
All unresolved, wooed this, then that refrain.
Slow-paced, I drew me where a mellow rhyme
In a low key soft through the shadows stole,
When lo! a child stood singing by my side:
And, "Who art thou, mellifluous Voice?" I cried.
Answer, ye limbs, dead ere your natural time!
Answer, my heart! and answer, O my soul!

TO A GRADUATE.

Toil hath its laurels, labor hath its crown;
And truth it is that duties nobly done,
Even in the humblest walks of life, have won
More bays immortal, more unstained renown
Than all the valorous deeds that echo down
The storied past. Hath not the patient nun
Within her soul more glory than the sun
In summer solstice, in the mid-sky thrown?
'Twas Duty led thee through Art's sinuous ways,
Up Wisdom's toiling steeps—God's steeps—and now
She comes with laurel wreaths to twine thy brow,
And sings aloft with joyful voice: "These bays
Are thine for Art and Wisdom: God's shall be
The golden crown of Immortality!"

THE ABSENT ONE.

Are we all here to-night? Nay, one is gone;
One chair is vacant by the hearth. The bright
Lone beacon in the window sheds its light
In vain for whom we watch. So has it shone
For weary months when the long day was done
To homeward guide his wandering steps aright;
He will not come—he will not come to-night!
And lo, how swift the gathering gloom comes on!
Be comforted, my mother! *He is here!*
I feel his hand smooth back my tangled hair
In mild caress. I kneel me at his chair
And hear him say, “My child! my child!” in clear,
Sweet accents. Come, my mother, come thou near!—
But nay—sweet God!—I dream! *He is not there!*

THOUGHT'S INFINITY.

Dense night and the broad earth! The one devours
The other's vastness. Thought, unbridled, flies
Pulsing from these to the immenser skies,
And leaps to space, where through the solemn hours
Majestic stars glide chorusing to stars,
System to system, while strange harmonies,
Order to wondrous Order singing, rise:
And yet can space confine Thought's subtle powers?
Not so: for lo, beyond the pale of place
Rapid and free it takes its eager flight,
Out-tops the finite, mutable and base,
The dimming suns, the fading stellar light,
And mounting o'er th' immensity of space,
Bows down at last before the Infinite.

IF THIS WERE ALL OF LIFE.

If this were all of life—youth ever flying,
 Unceasing toil, unending pain, the tears,
 The anguished woes, the heartbreaks, the swift years
With their great loads of sinning, wailing, sighing,
The blasted hopes, the dark despair, the trying
 For objects ne'er attained, the shrinking fears,
 The famine, cold, the ribald laugh, the jeers,
The ghastly dead, the struggles of the dying:
If this were all of life, O thou Desire
 For the One Good which art most manifest
 Of those insatiate yearnings in my breast,
I'd crush and tear and purge thee out with fire,
I'd plunge me from the eyrie crags on high,
And, craven beast, would will me but—to die!

THE PRICELESS GIFT.

If He, Who all life's gifts bequeaths, should say:
 "Thou art My favored child: speak thou thy will;
 At thy command are all the boons which thrill
The mortal bosom, honor, power to sway
Men's hearts with speech, a crown, a scepter, yea,
 Riches beyond compare, love, matchless skill
 In subtle arts, wisdom increasing till
The world shall crown thee with th' immortal bay:"
Unto the which I would give answer: "Soon
 Dissolve the powers which we do homage. Naught
 Of crowns be mine and none of wisdom, save
 To know Thee and Thy boundless good. I crave
Of all Thy priceless gifts but this sweet boon:
 The grace, dear God! to love Thee as I ought!"

A THOUGHT ON DEATH.

To think of death, to think of that long sleep
 Clasped in the cold embrace of clammy ground,
 The shroud immaculate our poor clay wound,
Polluted, while through the burst casket seep
The yellow waters, and in revel creep
 The carrion-worms our crumbling flesh around,
 Trailing through eyeless sockets, and the mound
Above neglected, where were wont to weep
Those who awhile remembered, then forgot:
All this—yea, e'en forgetfulness—were not
 A doom so terrible, but for that one
Dread thought of finding, when gaunt death we meet,
Some task neglected, labors incomplete,
 Some heaven-imposed duty left undone.

A DEAD SUN.

Methought I saw a Sun, massive but spent,
Pendent in space, and round about it sped
Black, lifeless orbs, like their great center—dead!
With yawning chasms fathomless 'twas rent,
Wherein a boiling, liquid lava pent,
Fumed white, then glowed a mass of fiery red,
So deep imprisoned on its burning bed
It had no power to light the firmament.
The Sun had died: and death to him was death
To all the great, majestic, stately spheres
That circled round, lifeless, no light, no breath!
And then I cried, as gazing on those biers
I whither saw our own world journeyeth,
“How many years, how many myriad years!”

AT DEATH.

Faint fluttering spirit struggling to be free!

I hear its wings against the prison bars

Beat audibly. Lo, the deep darkness lowers;

But through the glooms the yearning soul can see

The bounds of time merge in eternity,

And patient watch keeps through the long night hours.

O eager pinions, longing for the stars,

In yonder ether soon your home shall be.

Plume thou thy wings, sweet spirit! Frail the chain

That binds thee prisoned. Ah, the hand were vain

That strove to hold thee in so poor abode

When freedom waits thee in Elysium's light.

Sweet Christ! the chain bursts! the swift wings take flight!

Go, gentle spirit, forth to meet thy God!

THE HOUR OF PRAYER.

In ocean's arms the sun swoons in the west;
A holy quiet steeps the dewy air,
Save over earth, sea, sky and everywhere
Soft murmurs steal, half uttered, half suppressed,
Lulling the world to reverie and rest:
'Tis Mother Nature pouring out in prayer
Her ravished spirit. Silence: let us share
This sweet devotion on our mother's breast.
For prayer—what is it? But the weak reflection
Of Divine Beauty through our frail perfection;
And this I see in Nature day by day;
But when comes gentle evening, earth, sea, heaven,
Paint full the glories unto Nature given;
And we are part of Nature: let us pray!

A FIRST LOVE.

I learned to love her while in tender years;
God gave her to me, and as I caress'd
Her fair, sweet brow, and took her to my breast,
And heard her gentle whisper in my ears,
Soothing with song and joyous lute my fears
Of life's vicissitudes, I closer press'd
Her to my throbbing bosom, and was blest
With her sweet breath, sweet smiles, and sweeter tears.
I loved her then, and so I love her now;
Each passing year has made my love the stronger;
And but for her light touch upon my brow
My griefs were greater and my toils were longer.
She was my first love, she whom God hath given—
Music's her name, my life, my soul, my heaven!

HER EYES.

Two orbs there are in this one world of mine,
Whose bright effulgence floods it with a light
That pales the sun, and makes my world more bright
Than all the blazing spheres in heaven that shine;
Filling that world with such a warmth divine
No blasts of winter can its love-fields blight;
Nor has it stars, for there can be no night,
No gloom, where beam those lustrous orbs of thine.
One zone, one season, one perpetual day,
No flitting clouds to dark the azure skies,
No killing frosts my sweet love-flowers to slay,
Such is my world, such is my paradise;
And if sun-worship be my creed, I pray
Thou chidest not: my suns are thy bright eyes.

THINE IMAGE WAS ANEAR.

Thine image was anear me yesternight,
 So like thyself, thyself it was, methought:
 The tear that from thy brown eye sprung, was caught
Upon thy ebon lash, and shone as bright
As when in youth thou cam'st, thy pure heart light
 With buoyant love, and, all-confiding, taught
 My soul the rapture love in thee had wrought,
Till in Love's books I grew most erudite.
I looked to see the rose-sweet crimson rise
 To thy pale cheek when I did call thee fair,
 And I pronounced thy name thrice full and loud:
But lo, a void was all before mine eyes,
 Nor came an answer from the empty air—
 Naught save the hollow rustling of a shroud.

LOVE AND LIFE.

A hermit I, within my own heart sealed,
Shut out the splendor of the noon sun's light;
A pessimist, I deemed the world a blight
And life a curse. Pleasures to me appealed
My lone cell to forsake; I would not yield,
But in my living death embraced the night
Of loveless being, shutting from my sight
The heav'n of love to other eyes revealed.
But through a crevice stole a golden ray;
I strove to keep it out; it touched mine eyes,
And, blinded, I the curtain tore away,
When lo! a radiant flood from Love's sweet skies
Burst on my life, turned darkness into day,
And changed my cell into a paradise!

AN IDLE MOMENT.

Irresolute I walked a mountain way
And plucked the wild-flowers idly as I went,
Careless in thought, for on no mission bent,
Save from the city's noisome marts to stray,
I wandered aimless as a child at play,
And scarce took heed of my environment,
Pausing to joy the hawthorn's languid scent,
Or hark to some sweet wildwood roundelay.
Then all was peace: the robin's voice was stilled;
Nor mellow gurgle woke the soulful thrush;
Nor wind was moving, trees were motionless:
And as my soul the tranquil quiet filled,
I bowed my head beneath the holy hush,
Lost in the tranced charm of nothingness.

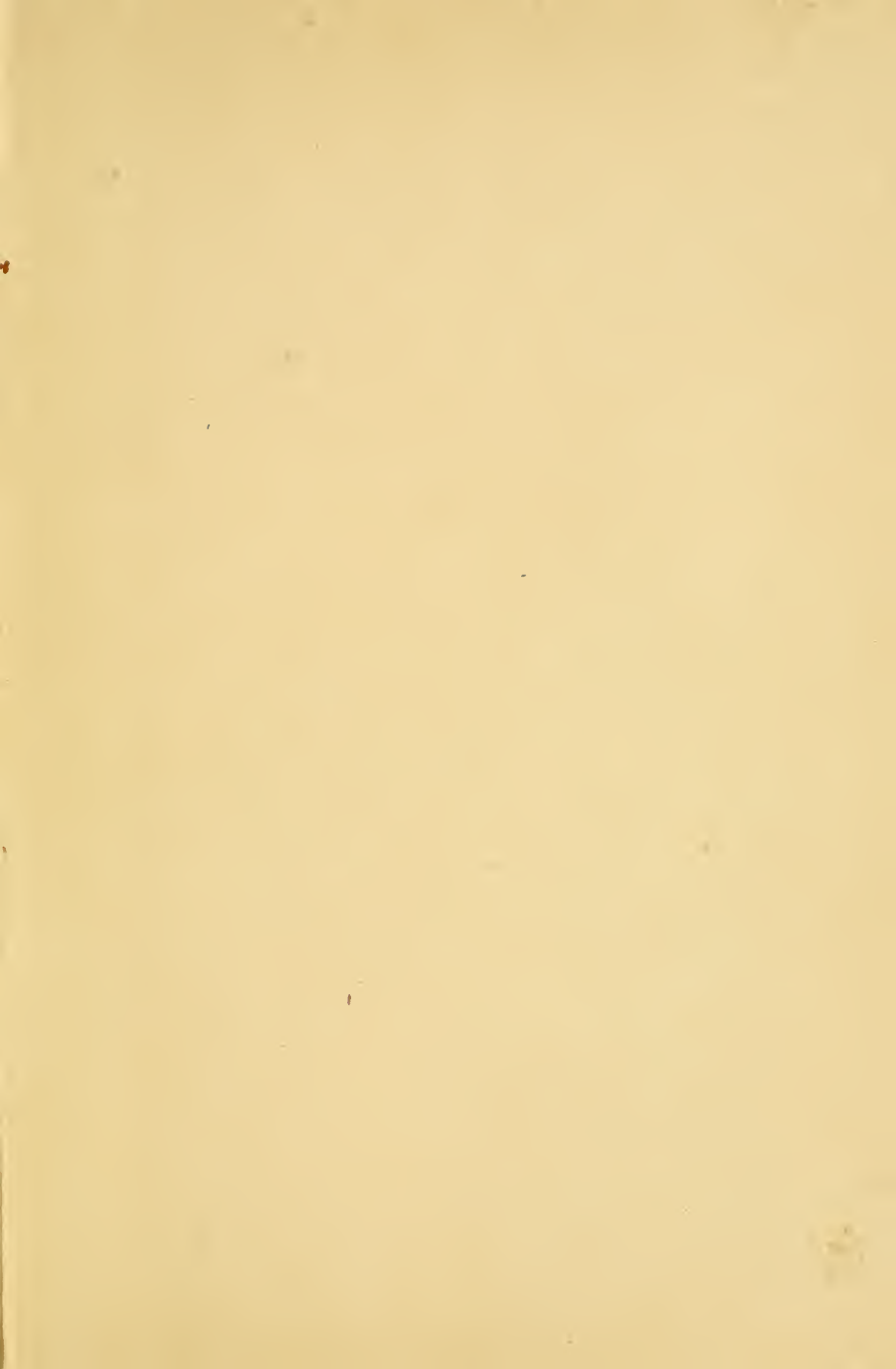
NIGHT'S PRELUDE.

I heard the busy voices of the day
 Grow faint, then fall to silence : all was still ;
 Save from the wood a plaintive whip-poor-will
Called to his mate, and a lone bee astray
Amid the clover droned. The ceaseless lay
 Sung by the wheel a-turning at the mill
 Its echo sent ; and a lone robin's trill
Rang from an elm, then softly died away.
Then from the fields and lakes and all around
 A myriad piping voices sent their call,
Deeping the silence with their hollow sound ;
 While o'er the world Night spread her solemn pall,
Betimes her reeds celestial strains let fall,
With all their measures filled with peace profound.

THE PASSING OF SUMMER.

I saw her in her richest robes, all dight
 In jeweled verdure sparkling in the morn,
 Laden with fruits by vine and orchard borne;
Heather and wold with golden-rod were bright,
And with the woodbine redolent; and white
 The daisies blossomed where the meads were shorn,
 While o'er the fields there waved the rustling corn;
So with each day she brought some new delight.
She plenty bears for every seed we've sown;
 The fruits she nurtures ripen day by day;
Fed by the dews, her grain has golden grown—
 Its tints were stolen from a Summer's ray.
Rich are her gifts, but when her task is done,
 She Autumn brings—then gently steals away.





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